

North Korean standard language

North Korean standard language or *Munhwaŏ* (Korean: 문화어; Hanja: 文化語; lit. "cultural language") is the North Korean standard version of the Korean language. Munhwaŏ was adopted as the standard in 1966. The adopting proclamation stated that the Pyongan dialect spoken in the North Korean capital Pyongyang and its surroundings should be the basis for Munhwaŏ; however, in practice, Iksop Lee and S. Robert Ramsey report that Munhwaŏ remains "firmly rooted" in the Seoul dialect, which had been the national standard for centuries. Most differences between the North and South Korean standards are thus attributable to replacement of Sino-Korean vocabulary and other loanwords with pure Korean words, or the Northern ideological preference for "the speech of the working class" which includes some words considered non-standard in the South.^[1]

Background

Following the liberation of Korea in 1945, the People Republic of Korea continued to follow the Korean language guidelines as defined by the Korean Language Society in 1933 with the "Proposal for Unified Korean Orthography" (Korean: 한글 맞춤법 통일안) and in 1936 with the "Collection of Assessed Standard Korean Words" (Korean: 사정한 조선어 표준말 모음). In 1954, the 1933 proposal was replaced by a new system (Korean: 조선어 철자법) by the North Korean government in which thirteen words were slightly modified. Although the reformation created little difference, from this point the languages spoken by people on both sides on the Korean peninsula only grew in difference.

During the emergence of the *Juche* idea in the 1960s, Kim Il-sung coordinated an effort to purify the Korean language from English, Japanese, and Russian loanwords as well as words with less common Hanja characters, replacing them with new words derived from native Korean words. In a lesson by Kim Il-sung in January 3rd 1964, titled "Some problems to develop the korean language(조선어를 발전시키 위한 몇가지 문제)", he emphasized the significance of the usage of language as a weapon in the socialist construction of all areas of development, and tried to align with the global trend of change as well as preserving ethnic uniqueness.^[2]

Thus, North Korea began to refer to its own dialect as "cultural language" (Korean: 문화어) as a reference to its return to words of

North Korean standard language	
문화어	
Native to	North Korea
Ethnicity	North Koreans
Era	Second half of the 20th century and 21st century
Language family	<div>Koreanic languages<ul style="list-style-type: none">North Korean standard language</div>
Early forms	<div>Old Korean language<ul style="list-style-type: none">Middle Korean language<ul style="list-style-type: none">Korean language</div>
Writing system	Hangul
Official status	
Official language in	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	–
IETF	ko-KP

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North Korean name	
Chosŏn'gŭl	문화어
Hancha	文化語

Korean cultural origin, in juxtaposition to South Korea's reference to its own dialect as "standard language" (Korean: 표준어).

See also

- North–South differences in the Korean language

References

1. Lee, Iksop; Ramsey, S. Robert (2000). *The Korean Language* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=NN-yldLOkCoC&pg=PA309>). SUNY Press. p. 309. ISBN 978-0-7914-4831-1.

2. 남북한언어비교 분단시대의 민족어 통일을 위하여 (<https://books.google.com/books?id=aAyGAAAAIAAJ&q=%EB%82%A8%EB%B6%81%ED%95%9C%EC%96%B8%EC%96%B4%EB%B9%84%EA%B5%90>). nokjin. 1989.

Transcriptions	
Revised Romanization	Munhwaeo
McCune–Reischauer	Munhwaŏ
South Korean name	
Hangul	북한어
Hanja	北韓語
Transcriptions	
Revised Romanization	Bukhaneo
McCune–Reischauer	Puk'anŏ



Play media

An example of the North Korean language as spoken by the translator and Kim Jong-un at the 2018 North Korea–United States Singapore Summit

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